

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE  
25<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL VETERANS GOLDEN AGE GAMES

# WIKI WIKI

news

TUESDAY, MAY 31, 2011

## The Sport of Old Hawaiï Brings New Life to the Games

25<sup>TH</sup> GAMES



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS • [www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov](http://www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov)



# Farewell from Honolulu!



I am so pleased the VA decided to stage its silver anniversary National Veterans Golden Age Games in Honolulu. Hawaii is recognized as one of the healthiest states in America, so it is appropriate that the Games, which promote healthy lifestyles and physical activities for our seniors, is being held here.

I've been a member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs since I entered the Senate more than 20 years ago, and was privileged to serve as its Chairman for four years. I'm very appreciative of the opportunity to serve as honorary co-chair of the 2011 Golden Age Games with my colleague, Senator Daniel K. Inouye.

Mahalo to everyone who helped make this event a success, especially our volunteers, sponsors, and organizers. I hope all our athletes and their families have enjoyed the Games here in Hawaii. I want to send my warmest aloha to each and every one of you and wish you many years of health and happiness.

Daniel K. Akaka  
U.S. Senator



I hope you've all enjoyed your time in Hawaii and experience at the 25th National VA Golden Age Games. We hope you've collected lasting memories of good competition and wonderful camaraderie, while supporting one another through the celebration of victory and good times and consolation in bad times; support is what we do! It's ingrained in our military and Veteran ethos.

As an Army Veteran, I also had the honor of joining you as a competitor in this year's Games and appreciated this experience!

As the Director of the VA Pacific Islands Health Care System, it is my privilege and pleasure to serve our country's Veterans every day. Medical studies have shown that many of the physical and mental challenges common with aging can be reduced with appropriate fitness and nutrition programs and it's not too late to start improving fitness, no matter what your age. The VA programs such as the Games and Sports Clinics throughout the year help us help you maintain overall fitness.

We all know aging is a part of life! Jonathan Swift once said, "Every man desires to live long, but no man would be old." Regular exercise, along with a balanced diet, holistic VA medical care and a bit of luck, can help us manage the aging process.

Each of you should be very proud of your efforts and achievements. On behalf of the VA Pacific Islands Health Care System, we thank you for your service, appreciate your participation at the Games and we wish you well on your travels home. Congratulations to our "Champions in the Pacific Islands!"

James E. Hastings, MD  
Director  
VA Pacific Islands Health Care System

# Centenarian Takes The Gold

Jack Faust was born in 1911. That in itself is pretty amazing — but add to that his win of two gold medals at this year's Golden Age Games, and you begin to understand this remarkable centenarian.

“The Games really keep me going,” said Faust, a member of the VA Palo Alto (Calif.) Health Care System team. “I met a young guy at the air rifle competition who thought he was the oldest guy here — at 98. I told him that was pretty impressive, but I had him by two years! Then we had a great time just getting to know each other. When you are this old, getting to know someone takes a long time.”

Faust served twice in the Navy, first in the Yangtze River Patrol (China) from 1928 until 1931, and then in the South Pacific during World War II. In addition to being a painter most his life, he stayed active as a volunteer at the Hayward, Calif., Police Department and VA and served the community as a Mason, an Elk, and a Veteran.

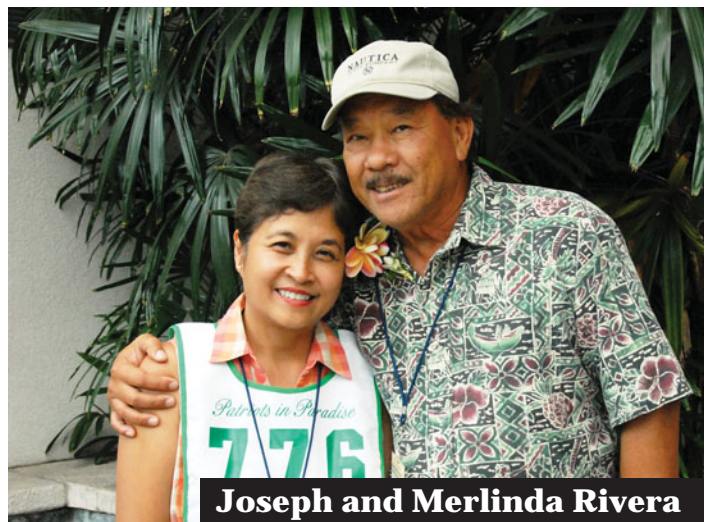
Jack's athletic career began in 2007 in Houston when he carried the California flag at the Golden Age Games opening ceremony and competed in bowling and checkers against Veterans in the oldest category (80+) who were as much as 16 years younger. Since then, he has won medals in croquet, shuffleboard, and air rifle at Games in Indianapolis, Birmingham, and Des Moines.

We believe that Faust is the only 100-year-old competitor in the Games' 25-year history. “Life begins at 55,” is one of the mottos of the Games, but Faust's athletic life began at 96. Just another sign of his hopeful and winning perspective — an attitude that epitomizes these Games.

“To the youngsters competing, I say: better get practicing for St. Louis, because I intend to see you there,” said Faust.



**Veteran Jack Faust**



**Joseph and Merlinda Rivera**

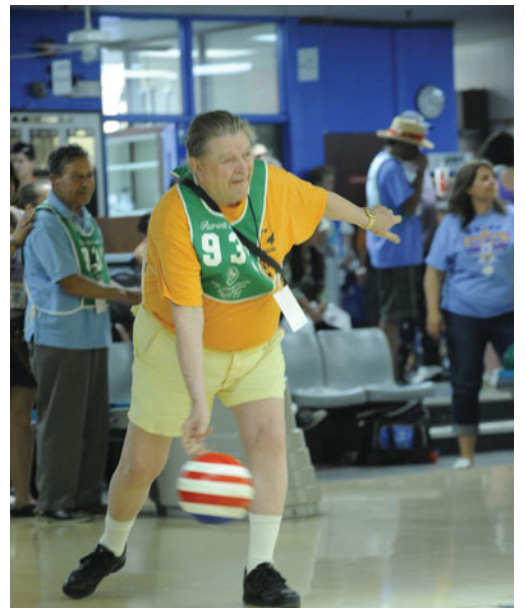
## It's a Family Affair

The husband and wife team of Joseph and Merlinda Rivera, both Army Veterans, are participating in their first Veterans Golden Age Games. Merlinda served from 1974 to 1977; Joseph served from 1967 until his retirement in 1982. Joseph, a Purple Heart recipient, recuperated at Tripler Army Hospital in 1967 for injuries received in Vietnam. He did not meet Merlinda until 1974 when he returned to Hawaii and she was stationed there. Then fate took these two natives of Guam in different directions. Years later their paths crossed again and they married in 1994. They are excited to participate in the 25th Golden Age Games and want to help the Hawaii team stay together and get ready for competition in St. Louis.













## The Thrill of a Lifetime: Outrigger Canoeing

On the beautiful Waikiki beachfront, Veterans donned life jackets and readied for the canoe exhibition. Then it was time for the traditional Hawaiian send-off. Ladies wearing flowers in their hair and kukui nut necklaces chanted a song of good will and calm seas. Two tanned and tattooed men stripped down to just about nothing and demonstrated ancient Hawaiian martial arts moves.

Finally it was time for the teams of three to grab a paddle, hop into canoes and paddle through an inlet into the sparkling blue waters. Two-hundred Veterans signed up for the challenge and throughout Saturday and Sunday they experienced what many called the “thrill of a lifetime.”

During the half-hour long trip in 20-foot waters Veterans were captivated to see whales, porpoises and other sea life. Many remarked that the waters were so clear they could see the ocean floor.

“It was great, a real challenge!” said 72-year-young Jerry Braun of Del Rio, Texas. “We were all gals in my canoe and we nearly won.”

“It was tiring to row that long and a challenge on the return to the beach,” said another Veteran.

Participating Veterans said they will always remember this event’s athleticism and the beauty and wonder of the Hawaiian Pacific.



## Visually Impaired Golfers Hit the Greens

Ten visually impaired Veterans enjoyed a picture-perfect Hawaiian day on Friday at Hickam Air Force Base’s Ke’alohe Golf Course, playing and sharing laughs. Visually impaired golfers play in teams of two, each with an assigned golf buddy who assists in lining up shots. It’s a nine-hole course and the goal, aside from winning, is to shoot no more than double par.

Ludwig Freiseis of Palm Desert, Calif. has been playing golf since he was a schoolboy. He recalls his start cad-dying — just 82 years ago. Now a sharp, fit 94 year old, “Lud” moves with a quick, spry step to the green and lines-up his shot with confidence. He’s been participating in VA’s Visually Impaired golf program for two years.

“This is great and keeps you active,” says Millard Reed from Reno, Nev., who’s been playing assisted golf for seven years. “It’s really good to get the word out that no matter what your age or physical impairment, Veterans can still have fun.”

Darrel Chapman served in the Air Force during the Korean War. He’d been playing golf for 30 years before losing his sight five years ago. Chapman, from Grand Junction, Colo., was thrilled to learn of the program and to get back into the sport he loves.

Golfers participating in this year’s NVGAG should consider the National Veterans TEE Tournament in the future, says Sickels. This new national event, just two years old, is held in Riverside, Iowa.

# She Also Served

This year 89 women Veterans are competing in the Golden Age Games. Their service in earlier days has made the choice of a military career easier for women today. Now almost 15 percent of the active military are women and there are over 1.8 million women Veterans.



The most senior female Veteran at the games is Rose Plastik. She served in the Women's Army Corps from 1943–45. Rose is participating in her third Golden Age Games and said, "This is my life now. The first time I came to the Games I didn't have to cook, clean or shop. I thought I was in heaven. I meet so many nice people and I enjoy all the friends I make at the Games."

Pamela Brule served in the Army from 1968–72. This trip to Hawaii is extra special for her — she was stationed here



40 years ago at Fort Shafter. She said, "The base is still there as a historical site. I was married at the church and although it has been torn down, the steeple is still there. The memories began to flood back when I went there." Brule believes, "just being here and being a good sportsman is just as good as a medal ... almost."



Patricia Sampley served in the Air Force from 1975–98, including Desert Storm. Regarding her third Golden Age Games she said, "It really has encouraged me to stay fit. I enjoy being around my fellow Veterans and it helps me to stay connected to a part of my past. The Games soothe me and let me know that people care about us as Veterans. I was afraid of water and I overcame that fear to compete in swimming at the Games."



## In Memory of Donald Herring

U.S. Marine Corps  
April 27, 1949 – May 29, 2011

Donald Herring believed being a part of the National Veterans Golden Age Games means "healing and care," and viewed the Games as a way to give back to Veterans who gave to their country. During his 23-year military career, he served two tours of duty in Vietnam and in Desert Storm. For the past 12 years he has continued his service as a faithful volunteer at the Birmingham VA Medical Center. Mr. Herring's love of sport and country will be carried on in the athletes of the Golden Age Games. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife, Loretta, his family, friends and teammates.

## Question of the Day:

If a movie was made about your life, who would you want to play you?



**William Avarell**  
California (Army Air Corps)  
Bing Crosby



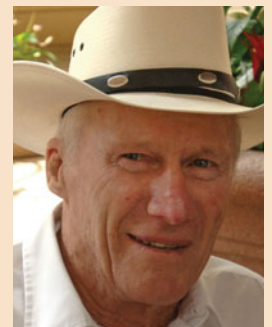
**Anne Sexton**  
California (Army)  
A beautiful adventure mountaineer who could leap a mountain in a single bound.



**William Stoops**  
California (Army)  
Me – no one knows me better.



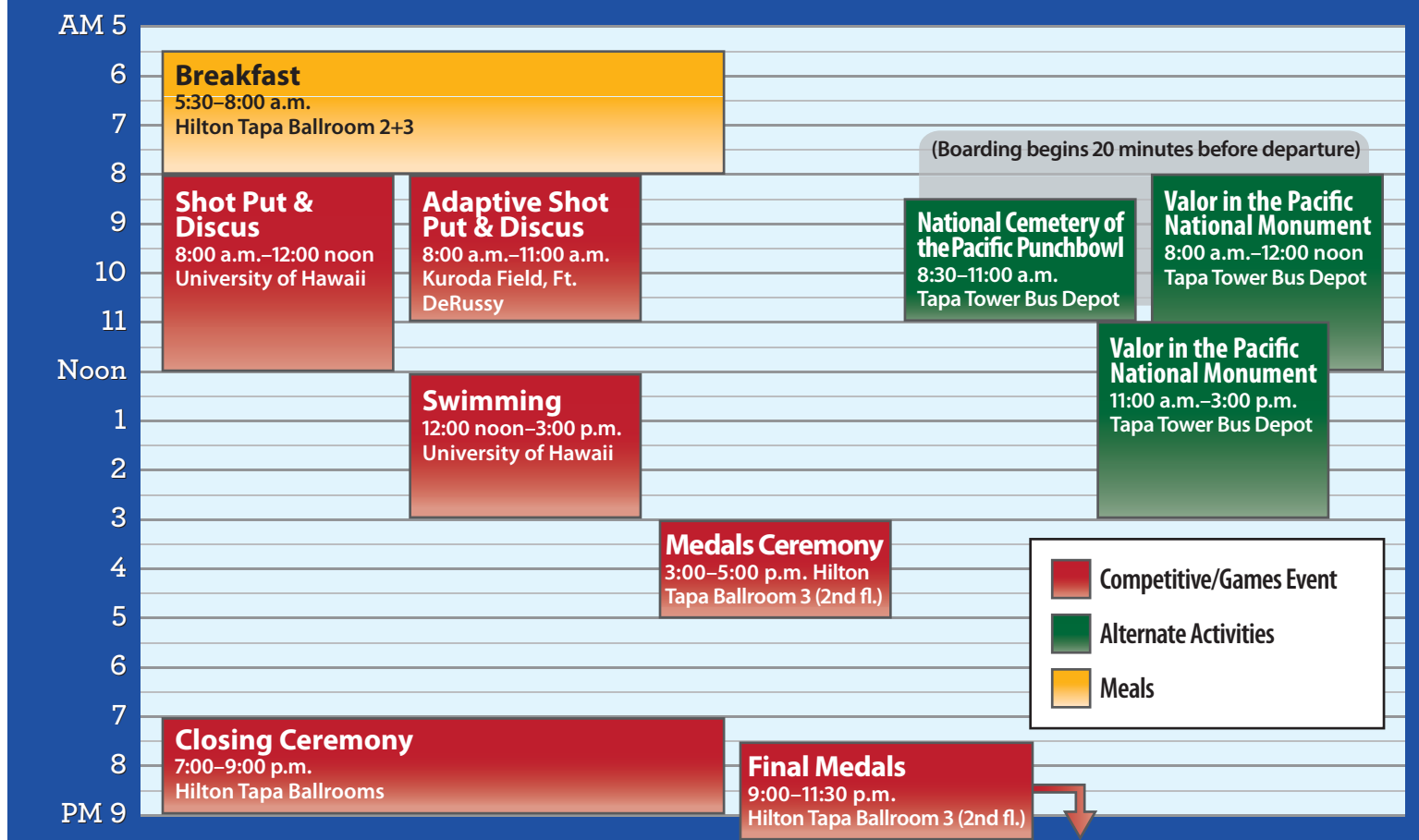
**George Heil**  
Idaho (Army)  
James Garner



**Marvin Hitchcock**  
Idaho (Navy)  
Clint Eastwood



# Schedule for Tuesday, May 31, 2011



## Odds & Ends

### NVGAG Medical Suite

Available 24 hours through June 1 at Hilton Tapa Tower, Room 3330. The medical team cannot write new prescriptions for visiting athletes and will not write prescriptions for narcotics and other controlled drugs.

### Wheelchair & Prosthetics

Hilton Tapa Tower 2nd floor, Iolani Suites 5-6. Open from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.; June 1 from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Wheelchairs may be returned June 1 from 7:00 - 9:00 a.m. All other prosthetics do not need to be returned. From your hotel room dial 62063.

### Golf Participants

If you played golf on Friday, be sure to pick up your golf towel at Customer Service at Tapa Tower 2nd floor, room Honolulu 2.

### Pearl Harbor

Only cell phones, cameras and wallets permitted inside. Storage for

purses or backpacks available for a fee. Items may not be left on the bus.

### Late Arrivals

All Veterans who checked in late and did not receive their memorabilia items may come to Customer Service in Tapa Tower 2nd floor, room Honolulu 2 starting Tuesday, May 31 at noon.

### For Medaling Athletes

If you missed your medal ceremony, come to the next to receive your award. Please be at the Medals Ceremony 30 minutes in advance. Athletes who medal in shotput, discus, and swimming should register at Medalist Checkin as they enter the closing ceremony.

### Lost and Found

NVGAG Lost and Found will close at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 31. Remaining items will be transferred to the Hilton registration desk.

### Hotel Departures

Departure notices with detailed instructions have been delivered to

athlete hotel rooms. Please ensure your flight information matches this notice and follow the instructions. Departure times from hotel are 3 hours before your flight. If there are changes in your travel plans, please contact Customer Service, Honolulu 2, Tapa Tower by Tuesday 4:00 p.m.

### Shuttle Schedule Changes

UH Shot put, Discus — 6:30 a.m.  
 UH Swimming — 10:15 a.m.  
 Final return to hotel at 3:30 p.m.  
 Punchbowl Cemetery — 8:30 a.m.  
 Pearl Harbor — 8:00 & 11:00 a.m.  
 Honolulu Airport — 10:00 a.m.

### Debit Cards

Some businesses place a hold on the card in access of your purchase amount, which may take 15 business days to clear. Please keep your card until all charges clear and call the number on the card if you have questions.